

The Vision

DEDICATED TO UNIVERSAL LOVE AND SERVICE



*Brahman is Infinite Love -
It is this love that pervades
and abounds as the entire
Universe around us. This Love
is sealed here in our hearts
so we are not different from
the Universe - The Universe
is Brahman - Ram. - Om. Om.
Om. Om. Love and namah
Ramesh*

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CONTENTS

My-All-in-All (Poem)	...	Swami Ramdas	265
The Great Secret	...	Swami Ramdas	266
Papa Answers	...		267
In the Vision of God	...	Swami Ramdas	270
This Ga of Love	...	Miss Raihana Bahen Tyabji	277
Mss. Co. (Unlimited)	...	Swami Ramdas	278
From Srimad Bhagavata	...		282
Epistle of Swami Ramdas	...		287
Anandashram News	...		288

Front Cover:

Sriram is Infinite Love. It is this love that pervades and appears as the entire Universe around us. This Love is seated ever in our hearts. So we are not different from the Universe; the Universe is Brahman-Ram. Om. Om. Om. Love and Namaskars.

—*Ramdas*

THE VISION

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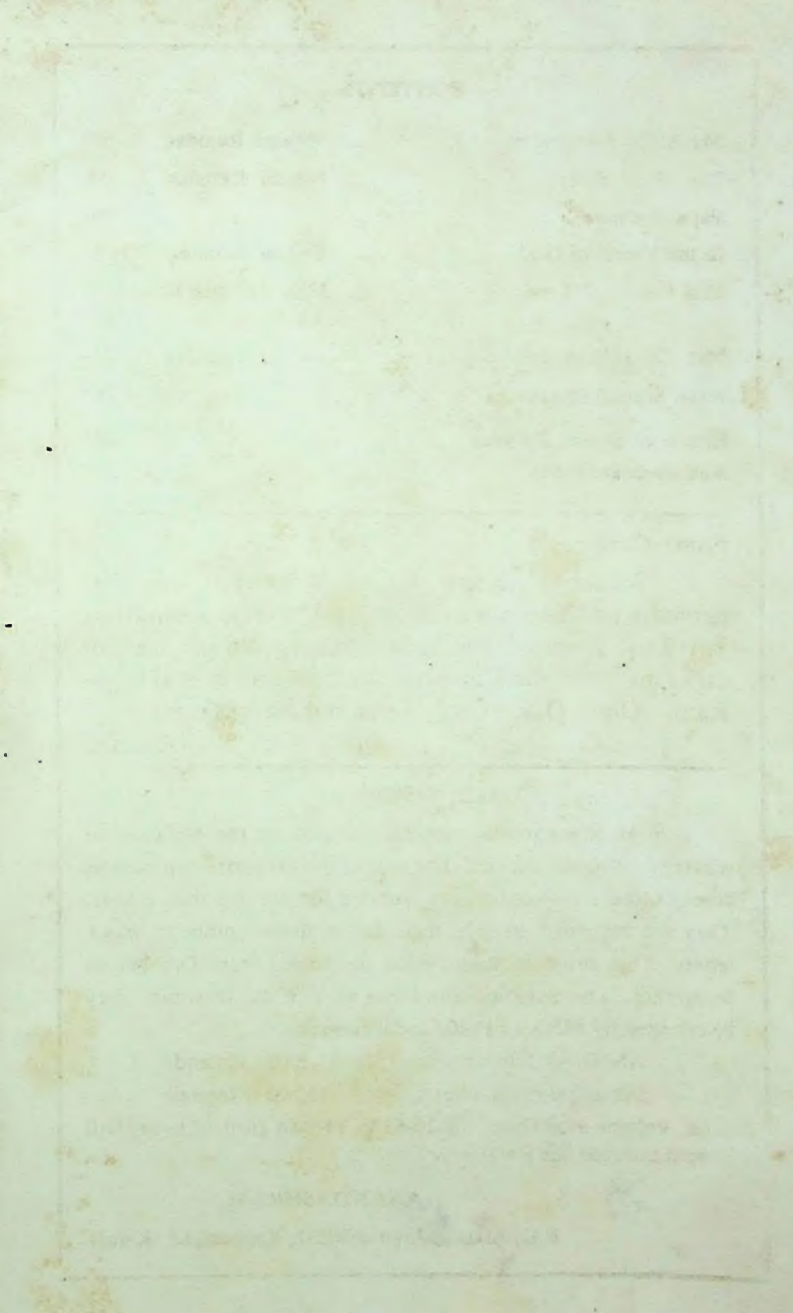
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Beloved Papa, Swami Ramdas
(1884 — 1963)

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

Ramdas

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम .

कृष्णाबाई

MY ALL-IN-ALL

My flitting thought is a spark divine:
It flashes like the twinkling star on the horizon.
It spreads its light and the worlds are aglow with it.
My wave of emotion rises like perfume divine;
It wafts like the cool breeze
And covers the fair Nature's face.
What the thought enlightens
Emotion adores through sheer joy.
God, my heart's beloved, what words
Can speak of Thy sweetness,
Thy beauty and Thy glory.
Am rest content, Thou hast become mine.
My mother, my master, my friend,
My all-in-all.

—Swami Ramdas

THE GREAT SECRET

By Swami Ramdas

To meditate on God as love and kindness is really a great source of joy and peace. Blessed indeed are those who merge themselves in Him, and have their *entire* being in Him. He is the fountain-head of all bliss.

In all our difficulties and distress, none can give us real and lasting relief except God, who is at once our Mother and Master. To rely on Him at all times and under all conditions is to be free from anxiety, care and sorrow. Because, He is all-powerful, all-loving, all-kind and all-wise.

Moreover, we cannot forget the fact that God is the only doer. His sovereign will alone works through all the Universe. Let us struggle to realize this and let this struggle be placed as our first and earnest offering at His holy feet. Let us pray to Him to give us that light, that knowledge, which dispels the darkness of our ignorance.

God is infinite love and as such He has assumed the form of the whole Universe. All beings, all things in the world, are only forms of that Eternal Being. To realize Him is to feel one with the Universe; to feel one with the Universe is to love all alike.

Such an immortal fountain of love is dwelling within our own hearts! Let us unlock this fountain within us, and sprinkle this infinite love on all alike. To realize Him as all is the ultimate goal of this life. This we can do easily by pursuing the path of Love or Bhakti. We can realize His mercy and kindness by becoming merciful and kind ourselves. We can realize Him as eternal peace and bliss by becoming ever peaceful and blissful ourselves. Let us not forget that He is residing within ourselves. Let us surrender ourselves to His almighty will. He is the sole doer. Let us realize that we are merely instruments in His hands.

God is our Divine Mother, and we are Her children. Let us feel Her fellowship always. She is ever seated within our hearts. She is eternal light, power and bliss. The world is nothing but Her Lila. The child's way is only to be a witness of this play. Mother and child are really one.

Wonderful is the Mother! She is at once one and two. Blessed indeed is he who becomes Her true child. To be Her child is to become Herself. This is what the Gita calls "*Uttamam-rahasyam*"—the great secret.

PAPA ANSWERS

Devotee: As God is all-pervading, He is always with everybody, wherever the latter may be.

Papa: The formless is everywhere. God says: "My devotee," in a personal sense. Otherwise there is no question of 'dear' or 'not dear.' He speaks of Himself as the Pūrushottama, as an Avatar. Arjuna was His devotee and therefore dear to Him. But he says: "I am not merely as you see Me in this form, but I am the all-pervading universal Truth." Arjuna was given that vision and he was frightened. He was under the impression that Krishna was, like himself, a form only, and he was worshipping Him for His greatness. Krishna made Arjuna His own. That is why He gave him Viswarupa Darshan or universal vision. You must be dear to God; then you are saved. When He makes you His own, then you cannot think of anything else but Him. If you say to God: "I am yours," the next day you will say; 'I am not Yours.' The force of Maya is so powerful. We must pass through the Bhakti path. Although Arjuna sometimes tried to escape from Him, Krishna caught him. Once you are in His clutches, you cannot get away. If a child holds the hand of the father, it may leave it. Let the father hold the child, then there is no danger. In the same way, if the Lord holds you, you are saved. That is how God caught hold of Ramdas.

There was no escape for him, and he did not struggle to get away. Ramdas was completely under His subjection. Like a puppet in the hands of the showman he danced. He was saved.

Devotee: The Self is said to be covered by five sheaths or Koshas. A person has to surpass these, one after the other.

Papa: In Bombay, every time Ramdas visited the city and stayed with any friend, there would be a large gathering. And one friend from Borivli was coming only to ask questions one after another. He thus came to be known as an "Interrogation mark!

Who has got these sheaths you speak of? Atman? Jiva, they say, is Brahman, and who has got then these sheaths? Ramdas does not see any sheaths anywhere. Only Atman is there, and Atman is everything. Tattvas, Koshas and Bhumikas have no meaning, if you look at them in the light of the Atman. They seem to have no existence except in the imagination of man. Atman alone exists, and everything is Atman. The Koshas also must be Atman, if there are any Koshas at all. Everything that is and is not is Atman. Then where does the question lead us to? It leads us to Him who alone exists. Otherwise it is only a talk about stages of spiritual progress. But there are no stages. That is a matter only for discussion or quoting scriptures. Sri Shankara has composed a song in which he says:—

"Na-punyam: na-paapam: na-sowkhyam: na-dukkham...
Chidananda-roopa: Shivoam: Shivoam"

"I am neither merit nor sin: I am neither happiness nor misery.... I am Shiva, I am Shiva, of the nature of Absolute Consciousness and Bliss."

Why should you go astray from that centre and wander about wool-gathering? Go to the centre. Get fixed up there. Why should you go round on the circumference? The centre is the Truth or Reality. Let us think, talk, act:

all in terms of the Atman, in the light of the Atman, identifying everything with Him. That was how Ramdas was taught by Ram. Whenever he spoke of anybody or anything, he would add "Ram" as the suffix. Whatever object you think of, is indeed He. Because there is nothing but He.

Let the mind work on those lines until the mind itself is transformed into He. Mind is He, words are He, you are He, I am He, everybody is He. How wonderful to conceive of things in this manner!

Socrates says: "To know that you do not know anything is knowledge." So, not to know and to know mean the same thing. In the ultimate realization, there is neither knowledge nor ignorance. There is only Atman, Truth or God. Then who is to know whom? That you know means you do not know. You have to rise above knowledge and ignorance. They have no significance for you. They say that temporarily knowledge may have value in order to destroy ignorance. Thereafter, knowledge is of no use. Triputi, viz: knower, knowing and knowledge, disappears when the Atman is realized.

Let us not talk about Atman because we cannot say anything about it. Leave it alone. Let us talk of diversity, on the plane of Prakriti; and that for the purpose of Lila. In that you will see diversity, all apparent. Because Prakriti is appearance, manifestation.

You can say what Atman is *not*, not what it *is*. You say: "I have realized God." The moment you realize God-I-ness disappears, or when I-ness disappears you realize God. Then who is to say: "I have realized God?" There is none. You can simply say: "Atman is." Who is to say "Atman is?" That is why we cannot speak about it.

Devotee: Some say that Bhaktas retain their individuality as they prefer to see and enjoy God. We read like that in the lives of saints.

Papa: Who is a devotee and who is the Lord? Atman cannot be seen. He is not an object of thought, an object which you can describe. He is beyond the grasp of the senses, mind and intellect.

IN THE VISION OF GOD

By Swami Ramdas

RAMDAS IS A CHILD OF GOD:

A few days later, the same sannyasi came to Ramdas and asked:

"Don't you know? The great Swami Akhandanandji is here. Have you seen him?"

"To see you is to see him," Ramdas simply replied.

"No, maharaj, you ought to see him," he said with a serious look. "He is only a few yards from the ashram, seated beneath a grove of trees. He always prefers to stay in jungles and does not like to reside beneath a roof. He is a famous mahatma. He is going away tomorrow morning. If you don't have his darshan today, you will lose a golden opportunity."

"For Ramdas, God is everywhere. He need not go specially anywhere to see Him," Ramdas answered.

"What!" he exclaimed with surprise. "You don't want to see him? You shall go to him," he added emphatically, and taking hold of Ramdas' arm almost dragged him.

"Come, I am also going with you." He was a strong man and Ramdas did not resist.

A few minutes' walk brought him to a large assembly of sannyasis, seated beneath the shade of about half a dozen tall, spreading trees. On a cot against a tree sat a sannyasi with only a loin cloth or kaupin on, while all the rest were seated on the ground.

Ramdas went directly to the Swamiji and placed his head at his feet and sat down on the ground near the cot. Now a stillness seemed to have settled on the gathering. All was silent for a few minutes. The Swamiji broke the ice.

He said to a householder devotee sitting beside Ramdas;

"Ask him if he has any doubt to clear," the Swamiji spoke in Hindi. The devotee was an English educated man. He interpreted the Swamiji's question to Ramdas in English. Ramdas' knowledge of Hindi was yet poor. So, he, of course, replied in English

"Ramdas is a child of God, and He has long ago removed all doubts of His child." The devotee conveyed to the Swamiji in Hindi what Ramdas said

"What is his position then?" came the next question from the Swamiji.

"His position is this," Ramdas replied, "he is like the river Ganges which, having reached the ocean and become one with it, still continues running towards it."

When the Swamiji and others heard the reply, a titter went round the congregation. The Swamiji remained silent.

Then the devotee on his own part put a poser:

"What brought you here then?"— a significant question!

"Ramdas came simply because Ram dragged him here," was the answer, and he looked at the sannyasi escort and smiled.

"What is it?" the Swamiji asked the devotee inquisitively. The devotee explained, and there arose a loud roar of laughter from the assembly.

Then Ramdas suddenly jumped up, and bowing again to the Swamiji ran a race to his room of the outhouse which he reached in less than a minute.

Swami Ramanand was a simple and kind soul. He looked after Ramdas with great tenderness. He counted on Ramdas' stay in the ashram for a pretty long time. In his own way he was watchful. Ramdas knew that to leave the place with his knowledge was out of question. Ram was bidding him to decamp—but how?

Ram provided the opportunity one day. The sun was unusually hot. At midday, some of the elderly sannyasis would have their forty winks. But this particular day the heat of the sun laid prostrate both the young and the old. The outhouse, at about one in the afternoon, resounded with a variety of snores! Swami Ramanand led the chorus.

Ramdas, who was all alive and active, taking the gourd pot in hand, slowly slipped out of the compound on tiptoe. He reached the road making the least possible noise—the sannyasis never the wiser. Once on the road, he started on a trot which soon developed into downright gallop! He ran for a smile and then walked at a brisk pace.

TOWARDS BANDA—BANDA

THE WATER—NECTAR OF PURE LOVE: Ramdas had no idea of any destination and did not care which way he walked. He found himself again in Karvi by evening. Early next morning he was proceeding along the railway lines, treading on the bed of sharp-edged granite bits near the rails. On covering a mile or thereabouts, he came to a level-crossing where the railway gate-keeper seeing him, said in a sharp voice:

“What is the matter with you? Are you mad? Don't you feel that you are walking on sharp-pointed stones?” Pointing to a road, he added: “Take to that; the road goes straight to Banda.”

Following the gate-keeper's suggestion, he moved on to the road and continued his journey. At noon he reached a small village, having on the roadside a few shops. A shop-keeper invited him to his shop. He got in and sat down on

a mat. The first thing his eyes fell on, as he entered, was a framed picture of Kali on the wall, decorated with a flower garland. A number of customers were seated in front of him, sipping a clear, transparent liquid from small tin cups. The strong odour was suggestive of liquor. So, he was in a liquor shop! It dealt also in ganja, for on another side a man having purchased the stuff was preparing a smoke.

The shopkeeper also prepared a chilam of ganja, and lighting it, offered it to Ramdas. It was taken for granted every sadhu smoked ganja! He was not used to chilam or the country pipe. He apprised the dealer of the fact and begged to be excused.

"I will teach you how to manipulate the chilam," he said in a kind tone. In a trice Ramdas was trained. He had a few puffs at the pipe.

An hour later, the kind shopkeeper provided him with a meal. At about three o'clock he left the village and continued the journey. At dusk he gained a small hamlet. On the roadside, below the trees, was an enclosure made of high stone benches. He got a perch upon one of them.

Usually one meal a day sufficed him. He had no craving for food in the night. But today he had a distinct feeling of hunger. The ganja smoke, although it did not affect him in any other way, created this feeling. He spoke of it. To whom could he do so but to Ram?

Five minutes had not elapsed when a lad of about fourteen ran towards him and leaping on the slab on which he was sitting, drew close to him, and said:

"I want to give you a meal. What would you have?"

"Rice and milk," Ramdas replied.

Ramdas was not surprised at his offer. His life had been replete with a series of such surprises. Ram's nursing hand was visible to him everywhere. The lad disappeared and returned two hours later. He escorted Ramdas to his cottage, and his kind mother served him with rice and milk. On finishing the meal he regained the seat on the stone slab.

Night passed. Next day he continued his journey. It was midday. The still air was burning hot. He went barefooted and bear-headed. For him suffering was joy. His supreme indifference to physical comforts had transformed every emotion of his into ecstasy. Thus bathing in the burning glory of the sun he walked on. Now a passing cartman accosted him:

"Maharaj, the sun is hot. On your left, a furlong away in the fields there is a small ashram of sadhu Ramdasji. Go there."

Ramdas, turning to the direction pointed by the cartman, made for the ashram. Here he met a very old sadhu. He was kind and affable. Ramdas had a bath at the well, a simple meal and rest for an hour on a shaky bench. Again he marched on. At sunset he found himself in the midst of a jungle. He always felt a peculiar feeling of exaltation when he was alone in the jungles at night. He repaired to a place beneath a large tree for spending the night. He laid himself down a rough ground. In less than five minutes, he had a shower of bird's droppings from the branches of the tree. Then he moved into the open and reclined on the soft grass.

The moon was up. Its cool rays illumined the forest. The light filtering through the leaves and branches of the trees formed on the ground below beautiful spangled designs, and the forest seemed as it were covered with a multi-patterned carpet. The air was cool and a soft breeze was blowing. The silence of the night was broken now and then by the flapping of the huge bats that flew from tree to tree and the distant hoots of owls who were holding their nocturnal discourses. The night passed in wakefulness and bliss.

Next day, again at midday, he was stopped on the road by another cartman who directed him to a temple close by. He said that Ramdas would do well to have the darshan of a sadhu named Kamtanath who resided in the temple.

The time was about one o'clock afternoon. The temple was about fifty yards from the road. He entered the temple. Everything was still within. There was none inside except a sadhu snoring on a cot. He quietly took a seat, a little away from the sadhu. The sadhu awoke with a start and his eyes fell on Ramdas. Beckoning Ramdas towards him, he rubbed off with his cloth the perspiration streaming down Ramdas' face and arms.

"I have no food to offer you," he said with a smiling face, "you have to be content now with mere water. In the night you shall have a good meal,"

Ramdas laughed and replied: "Mere water will do. maharaj."

"Go and have your bath,"

Ramdas finished his bath at the well and returned. The sadhu then, taking him by the arm, led him towards the main room of the temple where gaudily decorated images of God were kept. Then leading him to the narrow passage, he made him sit on a mat. Going into an inner room he brought a bowl of dal and a thick roti. Sitting down beside Ramdas he mixed the roti in the dal curry and suddenly thrust a lump of it into his mouth. Ram, indeed, has his own unique ways of feeding Ramdas! As he swallowed, he forced lumps of food into his mouth one after another, until he was overfilled. Coming out they sat on the cot, his arm round Ramdas' neck. He was simply gushing with love.

"You shall stay here for some days. Won't you?" he asked.

"No, maharaj. Ramdas is starting presently," answered Ramdas in an appealing tone.

"I am not allowing you to go. I want you to be with me for at least four or five days," he said compressing his lips.

To argue with him seemed to be useless. So Ramdas remained silent.

"You see the sun is still hot; have a nap," he said, and lying at full length on the cot fell asleep.

Ramdas waited for some minutes and, finding that the sadhu had fallen asleep, slowly got up and walked out of the temple on tiptoe, as he did at the Pilikoti ashram. As soon as he came out on the bypath, he ran at full speed until he gained the main road. A few miles ahead he came across a bullock cart, At the sight of him a man jumped out of the cart and drawing near him pleaded:

"Maharaj, do take a seat in my cart. I cannot bear to see you walking on the burning ground in the hot sun."

Ramdas told him that he was on his way to Banda and his course lay in the opposite direction.

"Then, here, please take this money; it is only one anna and a half, the railway fare from the station just a few yards from here to Banda. A train is due in a few minutes. Do catch it." He forced the coins on Ramdas.

Ramdas proceeded to the small station. On enquiry he was told that the fare was two annas. He came out of the station and continued his travel on foot. Before sunset he reached the outskirts of Banda. Here a woman on the roadside had, beneath a tree, a small thatched hut in which she stored drinking water in big earthen pots. She freely distributed the water to thirsty travellers who happened to pass that way.

When she saw Ramdas, she called out: "Mahatmaji, mahatmaji, come here; have rest in my humble shed." He responded to her call.

The kind mother made him sit on a bench and washed his feet and legs up to the knee with cool water from the pots. He also drank the water she offered. It was the nectar of pure love!

(To be continued)

THIS GAME OF LOVE

By Miss Raihana Bahen Tyabji

(Note: Reproduced from the "Sannyas Silver Jubilee Souvenir" of Beloved Papa, published in 1947).

Love, the Divine Messenger, stands at my door, calling me to a meeting with my Lord.

With honey-sweet cadences, ever-varying; in shining, chiming, rainbow-tinted, soul-ravishing words doth he convey to me the message of my Beloved.

I, so ignorant! What should I know of Love? How may I recognise him, who stands so humbly at my door, for true Love!

Sometimes I believed it is he, and sometimes am I bewildered!

For he concealeth his true form beneath countless disguises, that deceive the eye and perplex the mind.

Oh Love, Prince among actors! Shadow of that Master-Actor Who is named "Nata-Nagara"! Say, in what form comest thou to me now? The parts thou playest are but a part of His Maya; the Illusion-Play which He directs on the stage of the universe.

Say, say, oh Love! In which of His countless forms will my Lord enter the sylvan glades of my heart today?

Lo! He cometh as a child, and turneth me into a mother!

He cometh as master to take from me loving service. And He it is who preserves and cherishes the love that glows in the heart as a friend for a friend.

Ah, how may I praise that Divine Love-hunger, that to satisfy its own craving, is forever lighting torches of love from Flames of Love!

O Thou, Love Supreme! Thou alone art the Object and Receiver of Love in every heart that beats! Thou alone art the Giver of Love itself! Thou alone art the sweet exchanges of love between those that Love! Love! Love!

Is it not for the sake of Love alone that Thou hast created this vast miracle of a universe?

O Thou, Ocean of Love! O Thou, Master of Love! O Thou, perfect and matchless Beloved! O Thou, that in Love maketh of all hearts Thy dwelling-places!

Now hath the enchanting Game of Love begun between Thee and me!

And to my dazzled eyes all creation reveals bewitching glimpses of Thy maddening Loveliness.

MSS. CO., (UNLIMITED)

By Swami Ramdas

(This skit was written by Beloved Papa many years ago when several manuscripts were awaiting publication. —Editor)

Scene 3

The Place: Book case

Time: 8-30 A. M.

In Quest of God (I. Q. G): Friend, have you noticed that the corner, where the waiting manuscripts were fretting eager for publication, is vacant? One of them is already printed in a decent get up—the other is rapidly going through the compositor's hands and the third has gone to Ernakulam for a thorough revision.

A. F. G: What if? They were having their days of darkness as we had ours. Have you forgotten we had also our time of waiting. What is the matter with you green one? You look more green than ever.

I.Q.G: There are people who having eyes don't see and you are one of that family. Pray excuse my bluntness. I must speak out my mind. Don't you perceive me looking so out of date – still dressed in the faded robes of the last century. My paper is brown with age and the print on it though clear, is possessed by ever so many printer's devils.

A. F. G: What are you driving at? Why this discontent? I sympathise with you – tell me how and where the shoe pinches.

I.Q.G: None of your sympathy. Lip-deep sympathy is more galling than the want of it. I know my worth and many who have read me also acknowledge it.

A. F. G: O Friend! some distemper has seized your brain. May be, it is due to the very devils you spoke of kicking up a row within you. I never contend against the truth that you are great and that everybody who reads you loves you wholeheartedly. Let the cat be out of the bag. What do you propose?

I.Q.G: Propose? Why? You are perfectly blinded by your own conceit. Else you would scent what is what. Don't you realise that it is high time that a second edition of me be printed. With what love would my readers then handle and fondle me, If I could receive the much needed revision and redressing as you have.

A.F.G: Yes, friend, I wish you success. Be patient. There are only now about 100 copies of you to be sold. They will go off in a short time and then—

I.Q.G: I understand you—then what? the millenium? Can you not see how slowly I am selling? Book-sellers are fighting shy, in introducing me to the public. At my suggestion they are now allowed 25% commission. Still the books go not. It may be all due to my uncouth and therefore unattractive appearance.

A. F. G: No, it is not that. Religious literature, you see, as a rule sells slow. It is neither your contents nor get up that retards the sales. Hold on for a while. Now there is an awakening all round. Man is realising the futility of life – when no thought of God enters it. A craving for the peace of the Eternal, is rising in the heart of humanity. You will soon have a brisk and jolly time of it.

I.Q.G In a way I agree with you. But hope is an illusive shadow. So long as you cling to it you are nowhere. To surrender all your expectations to the will of the Almighty is the secret of realisation. So I leave all matters to His will and dispensation.

A. F. G: Now you discourse wisely. Our pages preach the very principle which you have now expressed: There is indeed no escape from doubt and despair except through submission to the supreme Power, that rules and regulates all events. By the way, have you heard that our old friend – M. V. G. is returning from Ernakulam.

I. Q. G: Yes, last evening the letter from Ernakulam says, the parcel has already been despatched. We may have him with us by this evening. Poor fellow, we have yet to see how he would look after a change.

A.F.G: His fears that he would be hacked, pounded and reshaped by this trip to Ernakulam were groundless. It appears, except for a few alterations made here and there, he remains intact. Somehow I feel a sort of exaltation at the thought of M. V. G's approaching arrival. Since he left I have been feeling a conspicuous void in our home. This is not merely because of his bulk -- but he is a wise, patient and amusing veteran of our class. We made so much fun of him, still he was all forgiveness. I love him, I adore him, I revere him.

I. Q. G: Oh! Oh Oh! You are shooting up like a rocket. Take care you don't drop down like a stone. I have also great admiration for M. V. G. but I would consider it foolish to grow so sentimental about it.

A. F. G: Friend, natures differ. I hold, life without a touch of sentiment is dry intellectual wildereness. Reason is a great faculty I admit, but the mingling of a soft and mobile emotion with it perfects it and fills life with an element of sweetness and ecstasy.

I. Q. G. I do not deny what you say, but sentiment when cultivated by itself overruns reason turning life into a fitful experience subjected to series of emotional shocks. Here lies the danger of giving undue importance to sentiment.

A. F. G: Again I must remind you, natures differ. You prefer to enjoy silently the rapture of emotion, whereas I choose to reveal and express it. So we differ only to agree.

I. Q. G: Let us not stretch the point any further. Each to his views. Each grows by his or her own experience. What we maintain at one time as a perfect idea is realised to be most imperfect at another as experience ripens. Life means movement and growth. The old is ever replaced by the new — a change that revolves in an endless circle.

A. F. G: Ah, you are madly diving into the fathomless ocean of philosophy. Before you proceed any further, I shall give you a hint. You may discourse on this subject for ages and ages, but you will have after all to end it with the inevitable confession that the depths of knowledge and experience cannot be plumbed by words. This is what the wisest of mankind have done. So you had better stop your speculations here by the pithy admission — "Truth is simply inexpressible." O friend, how now! you seem to be already lost in the depths. He is absorbed in the bliss of the Eternal oblivion.

Concluded

FROM SRIMAD BHAGAVATA (92)

SANKHYA YOGA:

The glorious Lord addressing Uddhava, began again: I shall now fully expound before you the truth underlying the doctrine of Sankhya as conclusively ascertained by the ancient seers Kapila and others. By realizing this, man sheds at once the delusion resulting in varied experiences such as joy and sorrow etc., caused by the notion of difference as between oneself and others.

During the period of final dissolution the subjective consciousness as well as the entire objective existence was one absolutely undifferentiated substance, Brahman. That absolute undifferentiated reality, Brahman, the Infinite, which is beyond the ken of speech and the mind, became dual as it were in the shape of Maya, objective existence, and that which reflected in it as the Jiva or the seer. Of the said two halves, one substance indeed is the well-known Prakriti, consisting of two aspects viz, cause and effect; while the other entity is consciousness itself, and that is called Purusha, the Spirit. Out of this prakriti even while its equilibrium was being disturbed by Me in the form of the Time-Spirit as motivated by the Jivas whose Karma is ultimately responsible for creation, there appeared the three Gunas—Tamas, Rajas and Sattva. Out of the aforesaid three Gunas was evolved the Sutra, the principle of cosmic activity, as well as Mahat, the principle of cosmic intelligence, which is ever accompanied by the Sutra of which it is a counterpart and in conjunction with it forms one composite whole. From Mahat, even as it underwent modification, there appeared Ahankara, the cosmic ego, which deluded the Jiva by bringing about its identification with the body etc. This Ahankara is of three kinds—Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic. It is the cause of the five Tanmatras, the subtle elements, the eleven Indriyas, the five senses of perception, the five organs of action and the mind including the deities presiding over the Indriyas and the

the mind. Though the mind is material or non-spiritual in substance, it is a sort of connecting link between Spirit and Matter inasmuch as it is interpenetrated by a reflection of the spirit and is therefore considered to be both spiritual and material. From the Tamasic type of Ahankara, through the Tanmatras, came into being the five gross elements—ether, air, fire, water and earth. From the Rajasic type sprang up the ten Indriyas; and from the Sattvic type were evolved the mind and the deities presiding over the Indriyas and the mind. The deities are those presiding over the quarters, the wind-god, the sun-god, Varuna the god of water, the Aswinikumaras, the god of fire, Indra the lord of paradise, Lord Vishnu, Mitra and Prajapati the deity presiding over procreation, and the moon-god. Impelled by Me, and rendered operative in conjunction with one another, all the aforementioned categories envolved the cosmic egg, which served as My excellent sporting-ground when I entered it as its Inner controller. As the egg rested on the waters, I appeared in it as Narayana, the second Cosmic person. From my navel sprang up the lotus that brought forth the universe and on that lotus appeared Brahma-deva the self-born, another manifestation of the Cosmic person, with four faces and invested with a body evolved as a result of past meritorious deeds. Characterized by Rajas and equipped with asceticism, the aforesaid Brahma-deva, the creator of the universe, evolved by My grace, the three spheres—Bhurloka, the terrestrial globe including the seven subterranean regions, viz, Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talatala, Mahatala, Rasatala and Patala; Bhuvarloka, the aerial region, and Swarloka (understood in its wider sense as comprising the five celestial worlds—Swarloka or paradise, Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka) with their guardian deities. Of these three spheres, Swarloka constituted the home of the gods; Bhuvarloka, of spirits, and Bhuloka, of men and other living beings constituting the sub-human species—animals, birds, reptiles, insects and moths etc. The

ethereal region extending beyond the three aforesaid worlds constituted the home of the Siddhas. Brahmadeva, the ruler of the universe, created a home for the demons and the serpent-demons underground in the subterranean regions known by the name of Atala and so on. In the aforesaid three spheres, are worked out all the destinies of those prompted by the three Gunas, Sattva etc. Mahaloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka are the successively higher goals, free from all impurities in the shape of attachment, greed and so on, to be reached through various Yogas, austerities, renunciation etc. My realm, Vaikuntha, is the objective to be reached through the discipline of devotion. With Me, having Time-spirit for My energy, as the dispenser of the fruit of actions, this living creation, yoked to Karma, rises higher upto the Brahmaloaka and descends to the level of the plant kingdom in the scale of spiritual evolution according to the nature of his actions in this world of matter, which is nothing but a stream of the three Gunas. Minute or large, lean or stout, whatever entity has come into being is made up of both Matter and Spirit. That which really constitutes the beginning as well as the end of a thing represents its middle too and that alone is real inasmuch as it pervades all its states. Its modifications have only a practical value even as the ornaments have of gold or earthenware have of clay. That alone is real adopting which as its material an earlier existence produce a later existence as Mahat-tattva produces Ahankar. That which is intended in a particular instance to be mentioned as the beginning and end of some effect is spoken of as real. The well-known material cause of this visible universe, viz. Prakriti, the primordial Matter, He who presides over this Prakriti, viz, the Supreme Person, and the Time-Spirit, which manifests the universe by disturbing the equilibrium of Prakriti—all these three are as a matter of fact the same as I, the Infinite. The elaborate process of creation ever continues in due order of succession from father to son for the sake of enjoyment of the embodied

soul that undergoes birth in various species of life made up of the three Gunas until the life of the universe comes to a close, or in other words until I Myself, so will it.

When it is time for dissolution, I simply gaze at the cosmic egg in which the creation and dissolution of the worlds alternately take place. The moment I gaze at it, it becomes ready for disintegration into the five gross elements along with the various worlds comprised in it. Consequent on the total failure of crops occasioned by a drought extending over a hundred years, the mortal body of human being and other living creatures is withdrawn into the food on which it subsisted; the food is reduced to seeds, the seed gets merged into the soil without taking root; while the earth on being dried by the sun and burnt by the flames emanating from the mouth of Lord Sankarshana, is reduced to the subtle state of odour, the cause of the earth. Odour gets merged into its cause, the element of water, and water is reduced to its own essential property, the quality of taste. Taste gets merged into its cause, the element of fire, and fire is withdrawn into its own essential property of colour. Colour gets merged into its cause, the air, and the latter is reduced to its subtle state, the quality of touch, while that too gets merged into its cause, the element of ether. Ether on being swallowed by Ahankar is reduced to its subtle state, viz, the quality of sound. Even so the Indriyas, are merged in their respective causes, viz, the deities presiding over them, and ultimately into the Rajastic Ahankara. The causes are merged in their controller, the mind, which is a product of Sattvic Ahankara and ultimately the mind merges in the Sattvic Ahankara along with the causes. Even sound returns to the state of the Tamasic Ahankara, and the mighty Tamasic Ahankara as well as the Sattvic and Rajasic types of Ahankara is merged in Mahat-tattva, the principle of cosmic intelligence. The most powerful Mahat-tattva which is endowed with the potency of Gnana and Karma is reduced to its causes, the three Gunas. The latter get dissolved into the Unmanifest

(Primordial Matter) and the Unmanifest is merged in the Time-Spirit, which has now ceased to operate. The Time-Spirit is merged in the Cosmic Person, the Creator of the universe, the Director of Maya, and the latter, in Me, the birthless, eternal Spirit. The Spirit, which is absolute, unconditioned and is inferred by the processes of creation and dissolution of the universe, as their background, stands by Itself and does not get merged in any other entity. How could there arise any misconception, engendered by the notion of difference, in the mind of one investigating into the Spirit as aforesaid; and if it ever arose how could it persist any more than darkness would on the appearance of the sun in the sky? This is the process of differentiating the Spirit from Matter, which cuts the knot of doubt and which has been set forth by Me, the knower of the truth relating to both, the cause and the effect, from the standpoint of evolution and involution.

JAI SRI KRISHNA

OM SRI RAM JAI RAM JAI JAI RAM

Do not worry about unessential things. Shiva and Rama are not different. You seem to make some difference between them. They are the forms of the same Truth. So you may meditate on any one of these forms, and repeat either Rama or Shiva Mantram. At one time, you say that you like Shiva Mantram and Shiva Dhyana, and at another time, Ram Mantram and Rama Dhyana. This shows that you have love for both. Therefore you may adopt any one of the two, bearing in mind that they signify the same God.

—Swami Ramdas

EPISTLE OF SWAMI RAMDAS

Beloved Ram:

Your loving letter of the 22nd instant to hand. When Ramdas asked you to be content in the situation in which God places you by surrendering yourself to His will, he did not mean that you would have no better prospects in the future. In fact, by your worrying over it you postpone the coming of better days. Hence Ramdas asked you to take refuge in God and be calm and collected. God's grace descends on those who place complete reliance on Him. It is then that He makes the devotee a suitable instrument for the service of others. So Ramdas' advice to you is to repeat Ramnam constantly.

Sufferings of one kind or the other come to all alike. It is all due to the previous actions of the person who is so affected. "What we sow that we reap" is an apt saying. Poverty is not the only cause of unhappiness. It is an unbridled and restless mind which is responsible for that state of things. There are so many rich men who are miserable. Why, Ramdas can point out to you many poor people who have trust in God and are leading a happy and peaceful life. Your valuation of things is therefore not correct.

You should not give yourself away to despondency. Take courage. Have faith in the merciful Lord, who is your sole Protector and all will be well with you.

Love and blessings.

Ever your Self:

28th November 1944

Ramdas

ANANDASHRAM NEWS

242 CRORE NAMA JAPA YAJNA: The total Japa done by devotees upto 17-8-1979 comes to 159,99,63,300.

PUJYA MATAJI KRISHNABAI will be completing her 76th year on Friday, 21st Sept: 1979: (Mahalaya Amavasya Day). Her health is all right.

SRI SWAMI VIDYANANDA SARASWATI of Hardwar came to Anandashram on 1st August and left for Cannanore on the 10th. Sri Swamiji, during his stay in the Ashram, took part in all the Bhajan programmes, himself singing devotional songs. He also gave daily discourses between 4-30 and 5-30 p. m. on the greatness of the Name of God.

**RE: EXEMPTION OF INCOME-TAX ON DONATIONS
MADE TO ANANDASHRAM, KANHANGAD**

(Copy of letter No. 17/A/Tech: 50/79-80 dated 17-7-1979 from the Commissioner of Income-tax, Kerala, Post Bag No. 1758, Cochin: 682 016, to the Trustee, Anandashram Trust, Post Anandashram-670 531, Kanhangad)
Sir:

Sub: Renewal of exemption under Section 80-G of the Income Tax Act, 1961: Donations made to Anandashram Trust.

Ref: Your letter dated 24-5-1979

Exemption under Section 80-G of the Income Tax Act, 1961, granted vide this office order C. No. 17/A/Tech: 50/72-73, dated 5-2-74 in respect of donations to Anandashram, is hereby renewed for a period of one assessment year.

This exemption certificate will cover only donations made during the period from 1-4-1979 to 31-3-1980 relevant to the assessment year 1980-81.

Yours faithfully:

Sd/- B. J. Chacko

Commissioner of Income-Tax, Kerala

ANANDASHRAM PUBLICATIONS

Note: Books marked ** are out of stock at present.

ENGLISH—By Swami Ramdas:

	Rs.	P.
In Quest of God (New Edition)	10	00
At the feet of God	4	00
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Gita Sandesh (New Edition)	4	50
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Sri Ramadasa Gita By Prof: M. R Bhat	2	00
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Editor: Swami Satchidananda

Publisher: G. Balasubramaniam (Balaji)

Anandashram 670531, Kanhangad, S. India.

Printer: K. G. Shenoy, Srinivas Mudranalaya, Kasaragod.

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम .